

June 7, 2003

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This letter provides comments on the drafts of Water Plan discussions on surface storage and conveyance that were provided at the May 28 Workshop.

Surface storage

This section should not state that it is not feasible to construct new surface storage for the primary purpose of increasing the state's water supply; that is by capturing flows that now go to the ocean in excess of established outflow requirements. It should instead state that the DWR has made a policy decision not to consider surface storage for this purpose, except in so far as CALFED's five studies meet that purpose. The discussion of CALFED's studies should explain that increased water supply is not a primary purpose of their proposals, and should indicate the range of probable water yield from each proposal.

Each chapter of the Water Plan should indicate how it addresses the basic statutory requirement of the Water Plan, i.e., to estimate the water supply needed to meet the state's future needs, and to propose measures to provide that supply. This chapter should make it clear that the DWR has decided that new surface storage will not be a measure in the Water Plan, except for whatever minor contribution the CALFED studies might provide to the need for increased water supply as the population grows. This chapter should therefore refer to the other chapters and measures that DWR is relying on to meet those needs. The Plan must then assure that the other measures proposed can meet the need.

The discussion of the CALFED studies should not refer to "releases for agricultural consumptive purposes". There is no indication and clearly no commitment that agriculture would receive any net benefit from those proposals.

The chapter should also discuss the power implications of onstream surface storage versus offstream storage or artificially injected subsurface storage.

Conveyance

"Water supply augmentation" should not be asserted as a benefit of conveyance. Transfers and conveyance move water from one place and use to another. They don't create water.

The CALFED term “water supply reliability” should not be used. Even if it were defined it would be misleading. Most readers think it means water supply “adequacy”, but CALFED uses it as a cross between water supply predictability and having a more uniform overall shortage among dry and wet years.

The discussion should not refer to a one billion cost to improve Delta conveyance unless it says what improvements are included in that rough estimate.

It is desirable for regions to do all they can to be more self sufficient in respect to water supplies. However, it should be clear that there will continue to have to be substantial movement of water from north to south and east to west. Furthermore, there is no way that regions can become self-sufficient in food and other products that are produced with water. The state must assure that the overall water supply is adequate to produce those products.

The first bullet under 2 on page 3 should read:

- Increase SWP permitted pumping to 8500 cfs after providing permanent barriers, dredging, and other measures to protect the South Delta’s inchannel water supply from impacts of export pumping and from the shift of San Joaquin River inflow from summer to spring for the benefit of fishery.

Revise the third bullet to read:

- Construct Tracy Fish Test Facility if technical difficulties are resolved, and if it can be funded, and the expected fishery benefit justifies the cost.

Eliminate the fourth bullet. There is no accepted plan for this.

The ninth bullet should read:

- Continue the temporary barriers project with local dredging, alterations of local diversion facilities where needed, and other measures now in discussion until the measures in the first bullet above are provided.

The next to last bullet should read:

- Facilitate water quality exchanges and similar programs to make high quality Sierra Nevada water available to urban Southern California interests providing that measures are taken to prevent the accumulation of imported salt in the soils and groundwaters of the agricultural parties to the exchange, and providing the resulting imported salt in agricultural drainage waters is kept out of stream systems.

Lining conveyance canals is only typically desirable when the water lost by seepage is lost to a salty aquifer or is otherwise irrecoverable. In many situations the seepage is an important way to recharge groundwater.